# A Study on the Evolution of Guangxi Eco-tourism Policy Text from the Policy Perspective

# Chen Riyan<sup>1</sup>, Hu Xiaowen<sup>2\*</sup>, Liang Bingyang<sup>1</sup>, Du Muyao<sup>1</sup>, Mai Peipei<sup>1</sup>, Mai Chengjing<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>School of Management, Northwest Minzu University, Lanzhou, China,730000

Abstract: Analyzing the evolution of Guangxi eco-tourism policy text from the perspective of policy tools is helpful for Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region to issue the follow-up policy text, adjust and promote the construction of eco-tourism system, and is of great significance to the sustainable and sound development of ecotourism. This paper integrates 62 representative policy service texts on ecotourism from January 2007 to January 2022, and uses text analysis method to quantitatively analyze the policy texts from the types of policy tools and the development stages of ecotourism policies in Guangxi. And found some problems at present: environmental policy tools are used the most frequently, and the policy tools are out of balance; Infrastructure appears more frequently in supply-oriented policy tools, while demandoriented policy tools appear less frequently; At the same time, this paper found that the distribution of policy tools in the eco-tourism system is not even enough. Aiming at a series of problems found in the above investigation, this paper put forward some relevant suggestions and improvement ideas, hoping that the suggestions put forward in this paper can provide some references and future development ideas for the future development of eco-tourism policies in Guangxi.

**Keywords:** Ecotourism; Evolution; Policy tools; Policy text; Guangxi

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Institute of Tourism, Sichuan University, Sichuan, China, 610041

<sup>\*</sup> E-mail: 296079144@qq.com

#### Introduction

Eco-tourism refers to the tourism mode that promotes the harmonious development between man and nature on the premise of protecting the ecological environment, and achieves physical and mental relaxation without destroying the ecological environment. Eco-tourism was introduced into China in the 1990s, and it has been developing for decades. Many outstanding scholars have made new explorations and innovations around eco-tourism. At present, China's eco-tourism has developed into a new tourism form that promotes the harmonious coexistence between man and nature. China has always attached great importance to the development of eco-tourism. On August 22nd, 2016, the National Development and Reform Commission and the Tourism Administration issued the Notice of the National Eco-tourism Development Plan (2016-2025), and formulated the eco-tourism development plan at the national level.

Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region is one of the regions with rich natural tourism resources and profound cultural heritage in my country. It relies on landscapes, pastoral scenery, and ethnic culture to develop a sustainable development model that is conducive to the construction of ecological civilization. When General Secretary Xi Jinping inspected Guangxi, he emphasized that "Guangxi's ecological gold cannot be exchanged", and the development of eco-tourism cannot be separated from the support and guarantee of policies. In the context of the new era, how to promote the development of ecological policy has become an era and mission research. After searching for relevant literature, it is found that in the field of ecotourism policy research, the previous research has not started from the perspective of policy tools. Therefore, this paper starts from the perspective of policy tools and uses text analysis to analyze the evolution of Guangxi's ecotourism policy texts. Carry out research to make up for the blank of previous research, and also provide a reference for Guangxi in the formulation of eco-tourism policy in the future.

#### 1 Literature review

At present, some domestic scholars have paid attention to the importance of ecotourism in promoting social development, and have made some related research on ecotourism policies: study the ecotourism policies of three Southeast Asian countries, China, South Korea, and Japan, and analyze the problems encountered by them.

Challenges and opportunities, and draw lessons for China[1]. Content analysis is used to summarize the articles and provide suggestions for China's future ecotourism policy [2]. By sorting out the different stages of China's ecotourism policy, it explores the evolution of China's ecotourism policy, and reveals the relationship between policy evolution and ecotourism development [3].

The development of foreign ecotourism began in the 1970s, compared with domestic ones, it started earlier and the research was relatively more systematic. At present, foreign scholars' research on tourism policy mainly focuses on the function, formulation and effect evaluation of tourism policy. The human resource factor is a secondary factor affecting the formulation of tourism policy, while the main determinant is the national economy [4]. Some foreign scholars have studied the evolution of tourism policies in Europe, Vietnam and Sri Lanka [5,6,7]. However, some scholars hold that the top-down policy has little effect on the economic development of local residents [8]. Some scholars have criticized India's ecotourism policy, and expressed Proposed future research[9,10]. An exploration of tourism policy and governance [11], which used scientometrics to study ecotourism policy trends in Japan, Indonesia and Australia [12], also adopted Quantitative and qualitative methods to study sustainability issues in tourism policy [13].

To sum up, there is no foreign research on the evolution of ecotourism policy from the perspective of policy tools, while most of the domestic research focuses on the operational effect of the policy or the implementation of the policy. However, no scholars have used policy tools to explore the evolution of tourism policy. Therefore, this paper attempts to analyze the evolution of ecotourism policy from the perspective of tools, using the X-Y two-dimensional framework. In this way ,we will explore the evolution process of Guangxi's ecotourism policy. This research is highly in line with the national development concept, which can provide reference for the formulation of future ecotourism policies in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, and also provide reference documents for the development of ecotourism in other provinces in China.

#### 2 Research methods and data sources

#### 2.1 Data sources

In order to better carry out analysis and research, this paper defines ecotourism.

Ecotourism refers to the orderly development of ecological and tourism symbiosis under the premise of protecting the ecological environment. This article is based on the website of the People's Government of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, the Department of Culture and Tourism of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, the website of the Development and Reform Commission of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, the website of the Natural Resources Department of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, the website of the Forestry Bureau of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, the website of the Department of Ecology and Environment of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, etc. This official website is the source of data, and the search identified 62 policy texts on ecotourism from 2007 to January 2022. The criteria for selecting policy texts are as follows: First, they are collected through key official websites, such as the official website of the People's Government of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, the website of the Department of Culture and Tourism, etc., with "eco-tourism" as the key search term. Second, policy texts mainly select texts with current effect such as laws, regulations, opinions, notices, standards, methods, and regulations. The third is whether it is a policy document at the district level of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region.

#### 2.2 Research methods

Based on the specific situation of ecotourism policy in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, this paper cites the viewpoints of Zhao Xiaoyuan and Su Jun in constructing a multi-dimensional analysis framework, and constructs an X-Y two-dimensional analysis framework from the two dimensions of policy tool type classification and policy development stage. This paper analyzes the evolution of Guangxi's ecotourism policy.

# 2.3 X dimension: classification of basic policy tools

Research on the classification of policy tools began in the early 1960s, when German economist Kirsechen classified policy tools into 64 categories. Since then, many scholars have conducted research in this area. In the classification of many policy tools, combined with the actual situation and characteristics of Guangxi ecotourism policy, this paper decided to use the classification method of predecessors [14] to select

the content of Guangxi ecotourism policy text as the X dimension The content of the three policy tools are supply-oriented, environmental-oriented, and demand-oriented.

Environmental policy tools refer to the targeted policies formulated by the Chinese government and some relevant departments for the good development of ecotourism. The specific content includes goals, measures, laws, finance, etc. Supply-oriented policy tools refer to the support of government agencies or relevant departments in terms of technology, talents, funds, etc. required for ecotourism, so as to improve the current situation of incomplete ecotourism construction. The specific content includes these points: related infrastructure, capital, technology and talents. Demand-based policy tools refer to the use of administrative means by government agencies or relevant departments to improve the construction of eco-tourism infrastructure in Guangxi, and to improve the local eco-tourism system by meeting the needs of enterprises or individuals for eco-tourism. The content includes the participation of some social forces, such as institutions, outsourcing, etc. Y dimension, the development stage of ecotourism policy, in order to explore the development process of Guangxi ecotourism policy, this project selects the development stage of Guangxi ecotourism policy text as the Y analysis dimension, and the specific division includes: preliminary development, exploration, and continuous promotion and strengthening stages.

# 2.4 Y dimension: the development stage of Guangxi's ecotourism policy

In order to longitudinally analyze the use of policy tools and explore the evolution of ecotourism policy texts in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, the development stage of ecotourism policy is selected as the Y analysis dimension. In the study of changes in science and technology talent policies, time nodes are divided into stages according to the introduction of key events. Many scholars have adopted the method of dividing time periods based on key nodes in the development of research content [15]. This paper divides the development period of Guangxi ecotourism according to the key nodes, and divides the policy development stage into the initial development stage, the exploration stage (2013-2016), and the continuous promotion stage (2017-2019), intensified implementation phase (2020-2022).

Therefore, based on the previous types of policy tools and the four development stages of Guangxi's eco-tourism policy, from the perspective of policy tools, this paper attempts to establish an X-Y two-dimensional analysis framework for Guangxi's eco-

tourism policy tools.

## 2.5 Statistics of guangxi ecotourism policy codes

This paper searches the official website of Guangxi District with the keywords "ecology" and "ecotourism" through manual search, and then through manual screening, the content of the policy text is screened word by word, which has nothing to do with ecotourism. A total of 62 matching policy documents were screened out. According to the content of the documents that have been screened, check and analyze the sentences word by word, and perform manual coding. At the same time, based on the content of the X-Y two-dimensional analysis framework, analyze the policy tools used, and finally obtain the content coding table of Guangxi eco-tourism policy.

#### 3 Statistical analysis of policy tools

#### 3.1 X dimension analysis

In this study, 153 policy tools were obtained by coding Guangxi's ecotourism policies, and the most widely used policy tools were used to classify and count them . The classification results show that among different types of policy tools (ie supply type, environment type and demand type), although Guangxi's ecotourism policies are basically evenly distributed, the distribution of different types is quite different and has significant differences. Among them, there are 93 environmental tools, accounting for 60.60%, ranking first; 43 supply tools, accounting for 28.00%, ranking second; 17 demand tools, accounting for only 10.90%, with the lowest utilization rate. It can be seen that the operation of Guangxi's ecotourism policy mainly relies on the role of environment-based and supply-based tools, indicating that government forces are dominant in this field, and social forces are rarely involved.

In terms of different types of policy tools (see Figure 2), the top three are strategic measures, infrastructure, and target planning, accounting for 35.29%, 20.92%, and 18.30%, respectively, which is the same as the top three. In contrast, the use of overseas institutions and capital investment has obviously not received attention. It is worth mentioning that among various policy tools, the use of overseas institutions and personnel training accounts for the lowest proportions, accounting for 1.96% and

1.96% respectively. From this analysis, it can be seen that there is a serious imbalance in various policy tools.

Infrastructure tools account for 74.42% of the supply-oriented policy tools, far exceeding the other three tools and ranking first (Figure 3), followed by technical support tools, accounting for 13.95%, and the use of capital investment and talent training tools is relatively small., accounting for 9.30% and 2.33% respectively, and the sum of the two is basically the same as that of technical support tools. In addition to the differences in the distribution of various tools, it is also a reflection and portrayal of the development of eco-tourism in Guangxi. Since 2012, Guangxi has successively issued a number of policy texts covering the improvement of ecotourism development, among which infrastructure tools are used the most. This measure fully reflects the urgent need of policy makers to promote the development and progress of ecotourism in Guangxi It also reflects the determination of policy makers to ensure the implementation of policies.

Among environmental policy tools (see Figure 4), the frequency of use of different tools in environmental policy tools also varies widely. Among them, strategic measures are the most frequently used, reaching 58.06%; followed by relatively high target planning tools, accounting for 30.11%; financial support tools and legal control tools are both used less frequently and are basically the same. As an important means for the government to provide a good environment for the development of ecotourism, environmental policy tools are of great positive significance for the development of ecotourism, so they are used frequently. The frequent use of environmental policy tools also reflects the flexibility of the policy formulation process. with maneuvering.

Compared with other policy tools, the use frequency of policy tools is generally lower. Regarding the use of specific tools among policy-based tools, the frequency of use of specific tools is also quite different. Among them, public service tools account for half, and the frequency of use of service outsourcing tools and overseas institutional tools is basically the same as that of public service tools, while trade control tools are not used in Guangxi's ecotourism policy. From this, it can be seen that the authority that policy makers give to organizations and individuals is relatively small. This situation is related to the actual development of ecotourism in Guangxi. The development of ecotourism and related supporting facilities cannot keep up with the problem. Policy makers use too much openness. Higher tools cannot achieve better policy effects.

#### 3.2 Y dimension analysis

Judging from the overall development stage of Guangxi's ecotourism policy, the frequency of using policy tools is increasing (see Table 4). In the initial development stage, the establishment of a legal system for ecological function protection areas in our region was first proposed, which laid the foundation for the subsequent development of ecotourism. In this stage, the highest frequency words are construction (2561) and development (2092), among which the high frequency words are protection (703) and resources (655). It can be seen that policy makers pay attention to ecotourism resources protection and construction. In the exploratory stage, the policy of exempting the urban land use tax on self-use land for enterprises engaged in the ecotourism industry in the pilot area from 2013 to 2015 was proposed for the first time. The top high-frequency words are ecology (940) and tourism (909), indicating that the government is paying more and more attention to the development of ecotourism. In the continuous promotion stage, the number of policy tools used is relatively stable, and the government continues to increase the promotion of ecotourism development. The high-frequency words speed up (316), strengthen (294), at the same time, Beibu Gulf (231), base (230), indicating that the government is speeding up the development of eco-tourism-related aspects. During the intensive implementation stage, the construction land for eco-tourism area projects has increased significantly, the evaluation of eco-tourism demonstration areas in the area has also increased, and various policies and measures have also been implemented. High-frequency words service (1152), culture (993), and ASEAN (648), cooperation (645), indicating that this stage attaches great importance to the service situation of eco-tourism and the integration of culture, and pays attention to the relevant cooperation between Guangxi and ASEAN. It will promote the development of ecotourism.

# 3.3 Comprehensive analysis of X-Y dimension

Judging from the classification of eco-tourism policy tools in Guangxi and the combination of their development stages (Figure 6), the growth degree and usage of various policy tools are quite different, and it is more obvious in the exploration stage and the continuous promotion stage. Environmental policy tools continue to show a steady growth trend, and their performance is relatively stable in different stages

of development. Among them, the two policy tools of strategic measures and target planning have grown significantly. Among supply-type policy tools, infrastructure tools are used the most, and the number of supply-type policy tools is second only to infrastructure tools. After 2013, with the Guangxi government's increased emphasis on ecotourism, the use of target planning tools has been growing steadily since then, and technical support, financial support, and public service tools have also been used. Although the overall use of demand-based policy tools has increased, compared with the other two policy tools, the number of use is still the least. The three types of policy tools show an overall growth trend in these four different development stages. This is because the state and the Guangxi government attach great importance to the development of ecotourism, and it also reflects the development of the times. Ecotourism has become a general trend of development.

#### 4 Main research conclusions and recommendations

This paper reveals the use of ecotourism policy by the Guangxi government, and summarizes the evolution process of ecotourism policy from 2007 to January 2022. First, Guangxi's ecotourism policy mainly takes the government as the main body of decision-making. The environmental policy tools are relatively overused, the participation of social forces is relatively low, the demand-based policy tools are used less, and the internal use of policy tools is very unbalanced. Second, the use of policy tools is generally increasing. In different stages of development, the internal structures of each policy tool are quite different. The evolution of Guangxi's ecotourism policy reflects the needs of Guangxi's policy makers in order to adapt to the actual development. However, after analysis, it is found that the use of policy tools is still insufficient. Therefore, in order to better use policy tools and achieve goals in the future, the following suggestions can be adopted when formulating policies in the future:

# 4.1 Optimizing the proportion of use of policy tool types

Pay attention to the optimization policy tool usage structure. Environmental and demand-based policy tools accounted for 60.79% and 11.11% respectively. It can be seen that the use of different policy tools is quite different. The difference between

the proportions of environmental and demand-based policy tools is as large as 50%. It can be seen that a large number of environmental policy tools are used to effectively provide a good development environment for ecotourism, but we must also pay attention to the participation of social forces and fully Mobilize the enthusiasm of social forces. It is recommended to appropriately increase the proportion of the use of demand-based policy tools such as service outsourcing, overseas institutions, and trade control to ensure that all social forces are mobilized to effectively participate under the premise of government leadership.

#### 4.2 The development direction is particularly important

Make clear the future development direction of ecotourism and formulate a blueprint for the development of ecotourism. Although the current eco-tourism construction in Guangxi is relatively good, there are some problems such as unclear boundaries in the specific target planning and long-term interests formulation. Correct use of tools.

### 4.3 The implementation of policies should be long-term and practical

In the use of ecotourism policy tools in Guangxi, strategic measures and target planning are used most frequently, followed by infrastructure. Among the use of ecotourism policy tools in Guangxi, the top three most frequently used are strategic measures 53 times, infrastructure 32 times, and target planning 28 times. However, the use of tools such as talent training, capital investment, legal control, trade control, etc. lower frequency. Policy-making should not only stop at the level of target planning and general direction, but also need to make practical results and implement policies into all aspects and specific measures.

# Funding

- [1] The Fundamental Research Funds for the Central Universities [No. 31920220119].
- [2] The 2022 Project of Innovation and Entrepreneurship Training Program of Northwest Minzu University [No. X202210742343].

#### References

- [1] Wang, S., Heo, J., Yamada, N., & Hwang, S. T. (2009). Comparison of Ecotourism Policies and Implications for China's Ecotourism Development: Journal of China Tourism Research, 5(3), 259-272.
- [2] Yang, H., & Cheung, C. (2010). A Review of English Literature on Ecotourism Research in China: Journal of China Tourism Research, 6(4), 370-382.
- [3] Lianlian, X., & Linsheng, Z. (2017). Quantitative Study on the Evolution of Ecotourism Policy Development in China. *Journal of Resources and Ecology*, 8(5), 460-469.
- [4] Baum T. The development and implementation of national tourism policies. *Tourism Management*, 1994, 15(3): 185-192.
- [5] Estol, J., & Font, X. (2016). European tourism policy: Its evolution and structure. *Tourism Management*, 52, 230-241.
- [6] Truong, V. D., & Le, A. (2016). The evolution of tourism policy in Vietnam, 1960–2015. *In The Routledge handbook of tourism in Asia (pp. 211-224). Routledge.*
- [7] Pathmasiri, E. H. (2017). Historical evolution of ecotourism policy and regulations in Sri Lanka. International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Development, 4(9), 116-24.
- [8] Thanvisithpon, N. (2016). Urban environmental assessment and social impact assessment of tourism development policy: Thailand's Ayutthaya Historical Park. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 18: 1-5.
- [9] Poyyamoli, G. (2018). Ecotourism policy in India: Rhetoric and reality. *Grassroots Journal of Natural Resources*, 1(1).
- [10] Cabral, C., & Dhar, R. L. (2020). Ecotourism research in India: From an integrative literature review to a future research framework. *Journal of ecotourism*, 19(1), 23-49.
- [11] Joppe, M. (2018). Tourism policy and governance: Quo vadis?. *Tourism management perspectives*, 25, 201-204.
- [12] Sisriany, S., & Furuya, K. (2020). Ecotourism policy research trends in Indonesia, Japan, and Australia. *Jurnal Manajemen Hutan Tropika*, 26(2), 178-178.
- [13] Torkington, K., Stanford, D., & Guiver, J. (2020). Discourse (s) of growth and sustainability in national tourism policy documents. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 28(7), 1041-1062.

- [14] Rothwell, R. (1985). Zegveld,. W. Reindustrialisation and Technology.
- [15] Guo, C., & Niu, Y. (2021). Research on synergy of science and technology policy types and policy tools based on analysis of policy text. In Journal of Physics: Conference Series (Vol. 1774, No. 1, p. 012006). IOP Publishing.